

Indiana House of Representatives

News and Information

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*Media Office
Democratic Caucus
John Schorg, Director
Statehouse, Room 157
Indianapolis, Indiana 46204
1-800-382-9842 or 1-317-232-9621
Fax Number: 1-317-232-9792*

KLINKER SAYS SPEAKER'S INSURANCE DECISION IS GOOD

INDIANAPOLIS—Indiana House Speaker Brian Bosma (R-Indianapolis) decided to reform the current legislative health benefit rules effective for those elected or re-elected to the House of Representatives Nov. 7 of this year.

State Rep. Sheila Klinker (D-Lafayette) applauded the decision.

"I, along with other House members, approached Speaker Bosma about this issue," said Klinker. "My constituents expressed their concerns to me as well, and I agreed with them. When I was elected, I never expected to have lifetime retirement benefits, and I do not expect them now. Most Hoosiers do not have health benefits that offer these provisions. I do not think legislators should receive them either. The provisions are too costly, and the state cannot afford them."

Klinker said legislators now pay their own health premiums while they serve in the Legislature just as other state employees do. She said the Speaker's decision requires all future House retirees to be required to participate in the Federal Medicare program as the primary provider, just like any other Hoosier. A Medicare supplement will be made available to future retired legislators. This supplement will be paid by the member. Klinker added that no state dollars will be contributed to future retiree's premium payments.

"The Speaker of the House is essentially the 'employer' of the House members," explained Klinker. "He has every right to change the policy as he deems necessary. Legislators will pay for their future health premiums. I believe this decision was a correct one."

"I do not serve in the House for the pay, for the health care, or for retirement benefits," she added. "I serve in the House in order to work for economic development in our community and state, for better jobs for Hoosiers, for greater educational opportunities for our children, and, most importantly, for the interests of Tippecanoe County residents and those who are in need."